

March 17, 2003

**Public Notice for 401 Certification  
and/or  
Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects)  
California Department of Transportation Highway 1, Fort Bragg, Mendocino  
Seismic Retrofit Project - Ten Mile River Bridge WDID No. 1B02207WNME  
Mendocino County**

On November 21, 2002 the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) received an application from the California Department of Transportation (CDOT) requesting a Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) for the Highway 1 Ten Mile River Bridge Seismic Retrofit Project in Mendocino County. The application was deemed complete on January 10, 2003. The proposed project causes disturbances to waters of the state associated with Ten Mile River Hydrologic Unit No. 113.13.

The proposed project is located in Mendocino County, Route 1, Post Mile 69.4 which is located north of Fort Bragg, Mendocino County, California. The project site is located on the Inglenook USGS map, township 20N, range 17W, section 33. The bridge is located approximately 1,600 feet upstream from the Pacific Ocean. The purpose of the project is to provide an earthquake resistant and scour resistant bridge by either replacing the existing concrete bridge with a new concrete bridge or retrofitting the existing structure to resist collapse during the maximum credible earthquake.

The proposed project consists of a geotechnical study to provide the necessary data to design the structure foundation. The study requires test borings along two retrofit alternatives and three replacement alternatives. A total of seventeen locations could affect state listed or candidate species. Some of the borings will occur in the Ten Mile River while some will occur on land. The in-river borings will be made from a drill rig mounted on a barge assembled from flexi-float sections. The land borehole locations will be accessed from temporary roads.

Core drilling in the river will occur in summer between June 15 and October 15 and will be limited to times when the river is of sufficient depth to fully support the barge. The land drilling will occur between June 15 and October 15, except at B-5 where drilling will occur after August 1 to avoid the reproductive season of the spineflower.

There will be no temporary impacts within Corps jurisdiction during the foundation study. Vegetation at and adjacent to some of the test hole locations may be mowed to allow access. Geoplastic landing mats will be placed over wetlands when heavy equipment is required to cross the wetlands.

Permanent impacts to Corps jurisdiction for each borehole will be limited to the boring holes themselves. The borings will be 152mm (6 inches) in diameter and range from 15 to 61m (50 to 200 feet) deep. At the completion of drilling, the upper 0.9m (3 feet) of each hole will be sealed with cement.

Compensatory mitigation for this project will not be necessary as there will not be any permanent impacts to wetlands, or endangered species.

Non-compensatory mitigation measures include:

- Best Management Practices will be utilized to control silt and erosion of exposed soils. At completion of the proposed project all disturbed areas will be re-vegetated and the grounds will be contoured to resemble the natural contour.
- All in-channel equipment work shall be conducted from a barge rather than from fill material placed within the river or equipment operating on the natural channel bottom.
- Water, fluids, and spoils generated by drilling or incidentally found within boats, barges, or equipment will be captured, retained in drums and removed to an approved disposal site.
- Drilling at the sites within the river will use water-based drill fluids. Boreholes will be cased between the barge and the river bottom forming a seal between the drilling activities and the river.
- Fuel for the drilling rig will be stored only in the equipment's fuel tanks, and approved transport containers will be used to transport fuel to the barge.
- All equipment, material and personnel will use one designated river access point only.

The California Department of Transportation (CDOT), as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project qualifies for an exemption. The Streets and Highways Code Section 180.2 states that activities under Public Resources Code Section 21080 are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The nearest receiving water is Ten Mile River, a tributary to the Pacific Ocean.

The seismic retrofit project is scheduled to begin June 1, 2003 and end October 15, 2003. Staff is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act Authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter. If you have any questions or comments, please contact staff member Andrew Jensen at (707) 576-2683, or at [jensa@rb1.swrcb.ca.gov](mailto:jensa@rb1.swrcb.ca.gov) within 21 days of the posting of this notice.